



For Release: Friday, April 10, 2020

20-597-SAN

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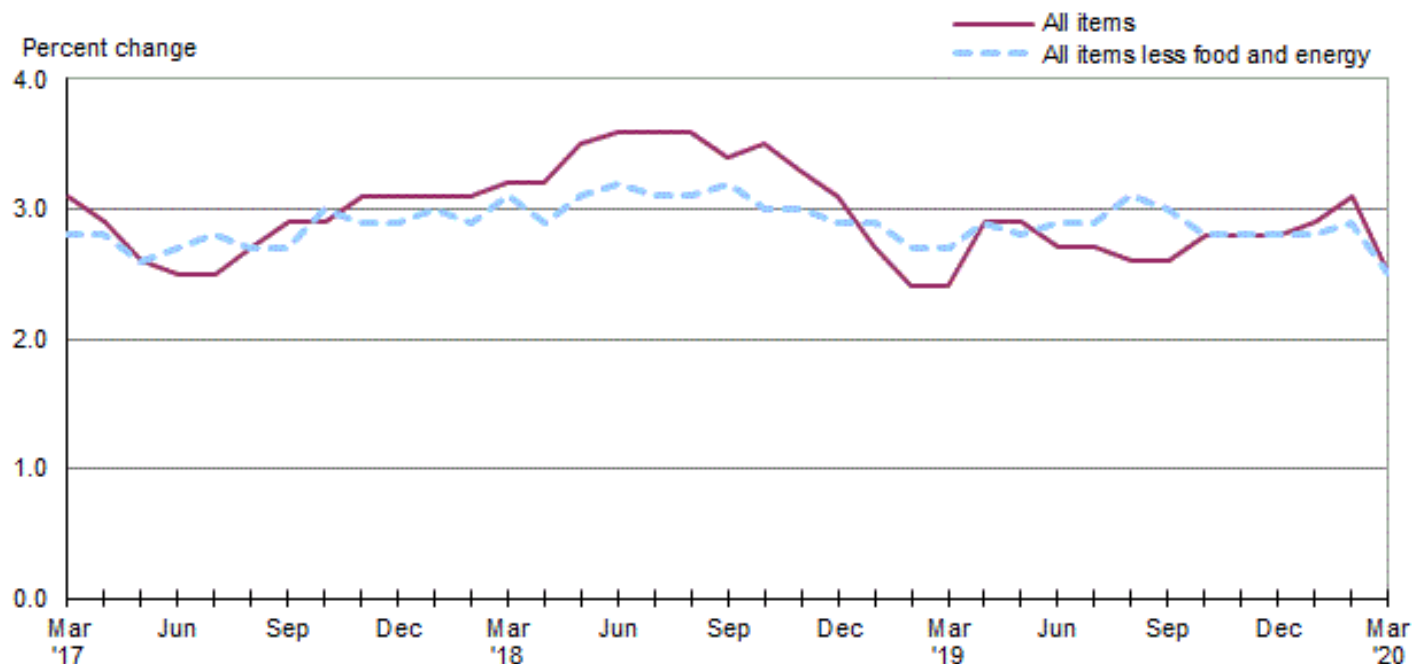
Consumer Price Index, West Region — March 2020

Area prices were down 0.2 percent over the past month, up 2.5 percent from a year ago

Prices in the West Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), edged down 0.2 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) The March decrease was influenced by lower prices for energy. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 2.5 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.5 percent over the year. Food prices rose 2.6 percent. Energy prices advanced 1.1 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of electricity. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, West region, March 2017–March 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices rose 0.3 percent for the month of March. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home increased 0.6 percent, while prices for food away from home were virtually unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 2.6 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 3.9 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home advanced 1.6 percent.

Energy

The energy index decreased 2.8 percent over the month. The decrease was mainly due to lower prices for gasoline (-4.7 percent). Prices for natural gas service declined 0.9 percent, while prices for electricity were virtually unchanged for the same period.

Energy prices advanced 1.1 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for electricity (3.3 percent). Prices paid for natural gas service increased 1.2 percent, but prices for gasoline declined 0.6 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy was unchanged in March. Higher prices for used cars and trucks (2.3 percent) and medical care (0.6 percent) helped counter lower prices for apparel (-0.7 percent), household furnishings and operations (-0.3 percent), and recreation (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.5 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (6.6 percent) and shelter (3.7 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decrease in apparel (-1.3 percent).

Table A. West region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January.....	0.5	2.6	0.5	2.5	0.5	3.1	0.2	2.7	0.3	2.9
February.....	0.1	2.1	0.6	3.0	0.5	3.1	0.2	2.4	0.4	3.1
March.....	0.2	1.5	0.3	3.1	0.4	3.2	0.4	2.4	-0.2	2.5
April.....	0.5	1.8	0.3	2.9	0.4	3.2	0.8	2.9		
May.....	0.5	1.5	0.2	2.6	0.5	3.5	0.5	2.9		
June.....	0.2	1.6	0.0	2.5	0.2	3.6	0.0	2.7		
July.....	0.1	1.4	0.1	2.5	0.1	3.6	0.0	2.7		
August.....	0.0	1.5	0.2	2.7	0.2	3.6	0.1	2.6		
September.....	0.3	2.0	0.5	2.9	0.3	3.4	0.3	2.6		
October.....	0.3	2.3	0.3	2.9	0.4	3.5	0.5	2.8		
November.....	-0.2	2.3	0.0	3.1	-0.2	3.3	-0.1	2.8		
December.....	0.0	2.5	0.1	3.1	-0.2	3.1	-0.2	2.8		

The April 2020 Consumer Price Index for the West Region is scheduled to be released on May 12, 2020.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on March 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) program suspended data collection by personal visit on March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in March was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices being considered temporarily unavailable and imputed. While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at www.bls.gov/bls/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-bls-price-indexes.htm#CPI.

Specific information about the impact of COVID-19 on March 2020 CPI data collection is available at www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/covid19-statement-march-2020.htm

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 29 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater

volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The West Region covered in this release is comprised of the following thirteen states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Expenditure category						
All Items.....	273.340	274.412	273.995	2.5	0.2	-0.2
All items (December 1977=100).....	441.839	443.572	442.898			
Food and beverages	268.585	270.347	271.333	2.5	1.0	0.4
Food	268.822	270.567	271.492	2.6	1.0	0.3
Food at home	250.901	253.013	254.483	1.6	1.4	0.6
Cereals and bakery products	262.896	264.157	265.166	-0.6	0.9	0.4
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	260.270	262.564	263.630	2.5	1.3	0.4
Dairy and related products	239.091	237.350	241.558	4.7	1.0	1.8
Fruits and vegetables	334.287	335.656	337.847	1.0	1.1	0.7
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	176.334	177.397	179.269	3.0	1.7	1.1
Other food at home	210.466	214.762	214.953	0.3	2.1	0.1
Food away from home.....	292.149	293.380	293.552	3.9	0.5	0.1
Alcoholic beverages	262.106	264.063	265.791	0.6	1.4	0.7
Housing	303.450	305.030	304.886	3.3	0.5	0.0
Shelter	351.875	353.541	353.446	3.7	0.4	0.0
Rent of primary residence(1).....	375.390	376.628	377.417	4.3	0.5	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(1)(2).....	370.471	371.409	372.093	3.9	0.4	0.2
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)(2).....	370.477	371.422	372.108	3.9	0.4	0.2
Fuels and utilities.....	309.674	309.627	309.696	3.0	0.0	0.0
Household energy	260.234	259.601	259.304	2.6	-0.4	-0.1
Energy services(1)	262.095	261.609	261.370	2.9	-0.3	-0.1
Electricity(1).....	293.364	293.999	294.333	3.3	0.3	0.1
Utility (piped) gas service(1).....	203.788	200.386	198.659	1.2	-2.5	-0.9
Household furnishings and operations	132.534	134.328	133.972	0.5	1.1	-0.3
Apparel	115.274	117.068	116.235	-1.3	0.8	-0.7
Transportation	216.625	216.984	213.878	-0.4	-1.3	-1.4
Private transportation	212.347	212.275	210.630	0.3	-0.8	-0.8
New and used motor vehicles(3).....	99.158	99.722	100.255	-0.5	1.1	0.5
New vehicles	148.092	148.965	149.093	0.5	0.7	0.1
New cars and trucks(3)(4)	102.862	103.472	103.547	0.5	0.7	0.1
New cars(4)	146.986	147.771	147.940	1.6	0.6	0.1
Used cars and trucks.....	130.773	132.052	135.137	-0.2	3.3	2.3
Motor fuel	258.303	254.399	242.430	-0.6	-6.1	-4.7
Gasoline (all types).....	256.949	253.140	241.209	-0.6	-6.1	-4.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....	253.570	249.696	237.743	-0.8	-6.2	-4.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....	248.008	244.018	234.805	1.2	-5.3	-3.8
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....	253.638	250.522	239.430	0.2	-5.6	-4.4
Motor vehicle insurance(6).....	839.206	842.220	850.000	-0.2	1.3	0.9
Medical Care	533.905	533.413	536.698	6.6	0.5	0.6
Medical care commodities.....	433.200	425.570	428.797	11.7	-1.0	0.8
Medical care services.....	564.908	566.670	569.968	5.3	0.9	0.6
Professional services	361.014	361.591	363.126	1.8	0.6	0.4
Recreation(3).....	116.687	116.291	116.013	0.9	-0.6	-0.2
Education and communication(3).....	137.876	138.112	138.229	1.0	0.3	0.1
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(6)	1,496.746	1,496.885	1,497.109	2.6	0.0	0.0
Other goods and services	456.835	458.649	459.989	3.5	0.7	0.3
Commodity and Service Group						
All Items.....	273.340	274.412	273.995	2.5	0.2	-0.2
Commodities	187.697	188.567	188.077	1.5	0.2	-0.3

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2020	Mar. 2019	Jan. 2020	Feb. 2020
Commodities less food & beverages.....	147.931	148.421	147.396	0.8	-0.4	-0.7
Nondurables less food & beverages	196.060	195.785	192.993	1.4	-1.6	-1.4
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	252.841	251.154	247.003	2.5	-2.3	-1.7
Durables	104.934	105.843	105.990	-0.5	1.0	0.1
Services	353.146	354.386	354.069	3.0	0.3	-0.1
Rent of shelter(2).....	374.781	376.555	376.453	3.7	0.4	0.0
Transportation services	318.559	320.819	314.092	-2.0	-1.4	-2.1
Other services	363.514	363.197	363.911	2.1	0.1	0.2
Special aggregate indexes:						
All items less medical care	261.485	262.619	262.049	2.1	0.2	-0.2
All items less food	274.222	275.184	274.548	2.4	0.1	-0.2
All items less shelter.....	242.528	243.367	242.825	1.8	0.1	-0.2
Commodities less food	152.166	152.699	151.744	0.8	-0.3	-0.6
Nondurables	232.523	233.240	232.275	2.1	-0.1	-0.4
Nondurables less food.....	201.080	200.950	198.445	1.4	-1.3	-1.2
Nondurables less food and apparel.....	253.480	252.180	248.657	2.4	-1.9	-1.4
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	365.163	365.862	365.238	2.2	0.0	-0.2
Services less medical care services.....	338.373	339.575	339.019	2.8	0.2	-0.2
Energy	263.417	260.843	253.650	1.1	-3.7	-2.8
All items less energy	276.317	277.645	277.685	2.5	0.5	0.0
All items less food and energy	278.434	279.692	279.573	2.5	0.4	0.0
Commodities less food and energy commodities	140.403	141.386	141.536	0.8	0.8	0.1
Energy commodities.....	263.135	259.104	247.053	-0.7	-6.1	-4.7
Services less energy services.....	359.762	361.104	360.782	3.0	0.3	-0.1

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(6) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.

- Data not available

Regions defined as the four Census regions. West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.